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# Keep Kids Safe: Car Time 1-2-3-4

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## Introduction

Every year, about 10,000 children 12 or under are injured, some of them fatally, in traffic collisions in Canada. Surveys show that **as many as one third of Canadian children are not properly restrained when they're travelling in motor vehicles.**

The only way to protect children from the dangers of collisions or sudden stops is to restrain them properly.

This booklet tells you about the four stages of child safety in vehicles and gives you simple instructions and tips on making Car Time a safe time for children.



# Welcome to the **Kid Zone**

The “Kid Zone” is the rear seat of your vehicle – the safest place for kids aged 12 or under. Here they are as far away as possible from the dangers of a front-end collision. They are also far from the front-seat air bags, which can cause serious injuries or even death to these youngsters.

Statistics show that kids are 25 per cent safer in the rear seat. If your vehicle doesn't have a rear seat, please check your owner's manual, call the manufacturer, or call Transport Canada to find out how to make travelling with children as safe as possible.

If your vehicle is equipped with side air bags, you may also wish to refer to our fact sheet “How to Protect Children in Vehicles with Side Air Bags” available on our Web site or by calling our Information Centre.”

**Remember: Buckle children up properly every time – even for the shortest trips!**

**Keep this booklet handy in your glove compartment.**

**Call us to learn more about the companion video, “Car Time 1-2-3-4.”**



# Stage One:

## Rear-Facing Infant Seat

### When

**Use a rear-facing infant seat from birth until your baby is around 1 year old.**

Use an infant seat in the rear-facing position until your baby has reached the weight and length specified by the seat manufacturer. Infant seats will safely restrain your baby until 10 kg (22lb.). For heavier babies use an infant/child seat allowing a larger weight in the rear-facing position.

### Why

Babies have relatively large heads and weak neck muscles. An infant seat cradles a baby's head to protect it against sudden stops or turns. Infant seats are placed "backwards" so that in a collision, the back of the infant seat takes the force of the impact.





# Instructions

Secure your baby properly in the infant seat and make sure that the harness straps are snug.

Using the vehicle seat belt, buckle the infant seat into the rear seat – the “Kid Zone” – facing the rear.

Double check the seat belt to make sure it's tight and properly threaded through the infant seat.

## Tips



If you need to attend to your baby, find a safe place to pull over and park.



Never ride with a baby or a child in your arms or on your lap.



Do not put an infant seat in a seat equipped with an air bag. Serious injuries or death may result if the air bag inflates.



# Stage Two:

## Forward-Facing Child Seat

### When

**Use a forward-facing child seat from 10 kg (22 lb.) until 18 kg (40 lb.), generally from about age 1 to 4½ years.**

Some child seats can be used longer – until your child weighs 22 kg (48 lb.). Follow the guidelines in the instruction booklet and on the label of your child seat.

### Why

A properly installed forward-facing child seat is safe and effective because its three different parts work together. The harness absorbs the forward motion of the child at the moment of impact. The vehicle seat belt keeps the base in place. Finally, the tether strap secures the top of the child seat to the vehicle.





# Instructions

Place the forward-facing child seat in the rear seat of the vehicle – the “Kid Zone.” Insert the seat belt through the back of the child seat frame and out the other side. Secure it tightly.

Locate the tether strap anchor (on the shelf behind the seat, on the floor, or on the vehicle frame). Attach and tighten the tether strap.

If your vehicle does not have a tether strap anchor, have one installed according to the vehicle manufacturer's instructions.

Secure your child in the child seat and adjust the shoulder harness for best fit, making sure it's snug.

## Tips



Make sure you use the tether strap.



Read the instruction booklet that comes with the child seat. Keep it handy so you can refer to it as your child grows.



Don't rush to move your child from a child seat to a booster seat.



# Stage Three:

## Booster Seat

### When

**Use a booster seat from 18 kg (40 lb.), generally from about age 4½ to 8.**

Children are ready to use a booster seat when they are over the maximum weight or height for their child seat – but no sooner than this! Check the instruction booklet of your booster seat for additional information.

### Why

For this age group, booster seats are the safest way to position a seat belt correctly over a child's body. An incorrectly positioned seat belt can cause a child to be seriously injured or even killed in a sudden stop or collision.





# Instructions

Place the booster seat in the rear seat of the vehicle – in the "Kid Zone."

Using the vehicle seat belt, buckle your child in properly, with the lap belt low and snug over the hips and the shoulder belt across the chest.

## Tips



Buckle an empty booster seat into place or remove it from the vehicle. You don't want it to fly around dangerously in a sudden stop or collision.



Never tuck the shoulder belt behind the child or under the arm.

Doing so could result in serious injury or death.



Don't rush to move your child from a booster seat to a vehicle seat belt.



# Stage Four:

## Seat Belt

### When

**Use the vehicle rear seat and seat belt (ideally with a shoulder belt) from the time your child weighs over 27 kg (60 lb.), from about age 8.**

Children at this stage are ready to use the vehicle seat belt. Kids aged 12 or under, however, must be seated in the “Kid Zone” – in the rear of the vehicle.

### Why

The lap and shoulder parts of the seat belt work together to keep both the lower and upper body secure in a sudden stop or collision. Seating your child in the rear of the car, the “Kid Zone,” keeps your young passenger furthest away from a front-end collision – and as far away as possible from the front-seat air bags, which can be dangerous for kids 12 or under.





# Instructions

Place your child in the "Kid Zone" – the rear seat of the vehicle.

Position the lap portion of the seat belt low and snug across the hips, never across the stomach. Position the shoulder belt across the chest.

## Tips



Special kits are available to have shoulder belts installed in most older vehicles that lack them. Check with the vehicle manufacturer.



Set a good example! Make sure you and all adults in the vehicle are also properly belted.



Never tuck the shoulder belt behind the child or under the arm. Doing so could result in serious injury or death.



# Car Time: More Tips

## SAFETY REGULATIONS

All infant, child and booster seats sold in Canada, regardless of their price, must meet Transport Canada's safety regulations. These regulations help protect children in a sudden stop or collision. The regulations also require safe materials, instruction booklets and a National Safety Mark on the seat like the one pictured here:



## SAFETY-RELATED DEFECTS

If you suspect that your infant seat, child seat or booster seat has a defect that might affect safety, contact Transport Canada and ask for a "Child Restraint System Complaint Form." Transport Canada investigates complaints received on these forms.



## SHOPPING CHECKLIST

- Does the seat have a National Safety Mark (pictured on page 10)?
- Is there an instruction booklet?
- Is the seat appropriate for the weight and height of your child?
- If the seat has an expiry date, will the time period cover your needs?
- Can the seat be installed correctly in your vehicle?
- Are the harness and tether straps easy to adjust?

Remember to fill out the registration card that comes with your new seat, so the manufacturer can contact you for any recalls.

## USED CAR SEATS

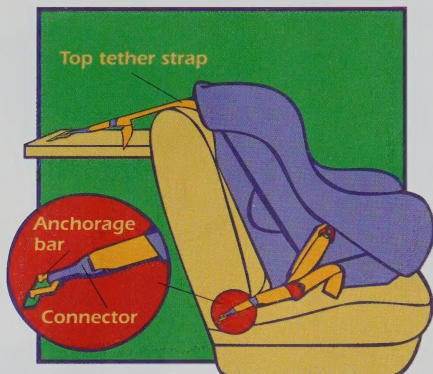
**CAUTION:** Buying a used seat can be risky! Used seats are often missing parts and/or instructions. Also, it's hard to know if there is a recall on a used seat.

**Never use a seat more than 10 years old because materials deteriorate with age. And never buy or re-use a seat that has been in a collision.**



# Car Time: More Tips

## UNIVERSAL ANCHORAGES



Look for this symbol on infant and child seats as well as on vehicle seat. Consult the vehicle's owner's manual.

More and more vehicles are entering the market equipped with universal anchorages. Universal anchorages make it easier to install infant and child seats in the rear seat of the vehicle. Soon, new infant and child seats will have two connectors that can be attached to the vehicle's universal anchorage bars.

These new infant and child seats also work with seat belts in vehicles that do not have the universal anchorages. If you have an infant or child seat designed to work with a seat belt, you will still be able to use that car seat in a vehicle equipped with universal anchorages.

Note that a top tether strap must be used on all forward-facing child seats, whether the child seat is secured by a seat belt or by the new universal anchorages.

For further information, contact the manufacturer of the vehicle, the infant or child seat manufacturer, or Transport Canada.

## BUILT-IN CHILD SEATS

If you buy a vehicle with a built-in child seat, consult your owner's manual for weight and height limits.



## SEAT BELTS WITH INFANT AND CHILD SEATS

Some vehicles require the use of a special clip with the seat belt to hold an infant or child seat securely in place. Other vehicles have special seat belt features to install an infant or child seat securely. Consult your vehicle owner's manual for more information.

## PROTECTING THE UNBORN CHILD

The best way to protect an unborn child in a collision is to protect the mother. Pregnant women should always wear the lap and shoulder seat belt. The lap belt should be snug and low over the pelvic bones and not against the soft stomach area. The shoulder belt should be worn across the chest. Worn properly, the seat belt will not harm the baby.



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# Making Canada's Roads the Safest in the World



Road Safety in Canada has improved tremendously over the last few decades — but there is much more work to be done. That's why Transport Canada is a proud partner with all levels of government and public and private sector stakeholders in Road Safety Vision 2010.

Canada's new **Road Safety Vision 2010** aims to:

- continue reducing the rate of traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all roadways including rural
  - increase the use of seat belts and proper use of child restraints
- decrease the number of fatalities and serious injuries in crashes involving alcohol, speed and at intersections.

## Safety is a shared responsibility!

For more information call 1 800 333-0371, in Ottawa (613) 998-8616

For information on vehicle defects and recalls, call 1 800 333-0510, in Ottawa (613) 993-9851

E-mail us at: [roadsafetywebmail@tc.gc.ca](mailto:roadsafetywebmail@tc.gc.ca)



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